Directorate of Intelligence

~~Secret~~ 25X1

Afghanistan: Goals and Prospects for the Insurgents [redacted] 25X1

An Intelligence Assessment

~~Secret~~

NESA 83-10110
May 1983

Copy 308

Directorate of
Intelligence

Secret

25X1

Afghanistan: Goals and Prospects for the Insurgents

25X1

An Intelligence Assessment

This paper was prepared by Office of Near East–South Asia Analysis. It was coordinated with the Directorate of Operations and the National Intelligence Council.

Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, South Asia Division, NESA,

25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1

Secret
NESA 83-10110
May 1983

Afghanistan: Goals and Prospects for the Insurgents [redacted] 25X1

Key Judgments

Information available as of 10 March 1983 was used in this report.

The Afghan resistance as a whole will continue to grow stronger over the next two or three years, although some organizations will suffer setbacks and the resistance will be unable to resolve basic problems such as disunity. The most serious threats to the resistance—such as the loss of popular support—probably will grow slowly and, despite the long-term danger, will probably not affect the resistance significantly in the next few years:

- Many insurgent bands can still improve their capabilities by acquiring more arms and adopting successful tactics, despite continuing disunity within the resistance.
- The formation of regional organizations and ad hoc cooperation have already ameliorated some insurgent problems—such as an uneven distribution of both resources and the burden of fighting and a lack of operational coordination. We expect the success of these organizations to encourage their formation in additional areas of the country.
- The rise of organizations emphasizing common regional interests rather than ideological differences may reduce infighting among insurgents.
- Civilian and insurgent morale remains high in most places, though the cumulative costs of Soviet operations to both civilians and insurgents in the longer term might lead to a significant reduction in insurgent activity.
- The flight of a significant part of the population from fighting in the countryside to Pakistan, Iran, and Kabul has so far not adversely affected insurgent capabilities and appears unlikely to hurt the resistance in the next few years. In the long run, however, the settlement of insurgents' families outside the country could eliminate a major reason for resisting the Soviets.

It is unlikely that resistance groups will overcome the differences that have prevented the unification of the resistance above the local level. The absence of an organization able to speak for the resistance as a whole severely hinders their efforts to influence international opinion, to play a significant role in negotiations about Afghanistan's future, and to ensure that foreign diplomatic and material support for the resistance continues.

25X1

A massive augmentation of Soviet forces in Afghanistan—though highly unlikely—would cripple resistance operations. Continued resistance impedes Soviet use of the country as a base for projecting both political and military influence in the Persian Gulf and the Indian subcontinent. The Soviet failure to overcome the insurgents also weakens the image of the USSR as a power whose wishes must be accommodated. The continuing Soviet effort, however, is a reminder of Moscow's persistence in trying to assert its will. US policymakers could face difficult decisions in formulating a response if the Soviets at some point decide to reduce the intensity of the insurgency with massive reinforcements.

25X1

25X1

Afghanistan: Goals and Prospects for the Insurgents

25X1

The Prospects for the Afghan Insurgents [1]

If there is no significant change in Moscow's Afghan policies, we believe that the most important factors determining the course of the resistance in the next few years will be:

- The degree to which the resistance can overcome political, regional, and ethnic differences.
- The ability of the individual insurgent bands to maintain or improve their military capabilities.
- Continued popular support for the resistance.

The Fragmented Resistance

The Afghan resistance is divided into hundreds of different groups. Only a few of the resistance leaders have revealed specific political programs, but their statements to newsmen and diplomats and their actions and views as reported by individuals with good access to resistance organizations give an indication of the aims of the different groups.

There are wide differences in both specific goals and strategy with significant disagreements even about what it means to defend Islam and to free Afghanistan from the Soviets.[2] Most insurgents fall into one of three categories:

- The Islamic fundamentalists, who want to make Afghanistan into a theocratic state.
- The moderates, who seek a secular government similar to those before the Communists came to power.

- Those bands, probably the overwhelming majority, who seek considerable autonomy for their region or ethnic group and favor a minimum of interference in local affairs from Kabul.

25X1

Other groups, such as Maoists, social democrats, and national socialists, fit into none of these categories, but they have little power and are unlikely to have much influence on the course of the resistance (see table).

25X1

25X1

Insurgent efforts to influence international opinion will continue to be hindered both by an inability to decide on a common program and the adverse impact of fragmentation and squabbling. The Peshawar groups, who do the most fighting among themselves, also have the greatest access to the world press. The ability of the insurgents to play a serious part in negotiations—either with the Soviets or with potential allies—or to challenge the legitimacy of the Babrak government in international forums, such as the United Nations, is severely hampered by their inability to form a delegation with any real authority to speak for the resistance.

25X1

25X1

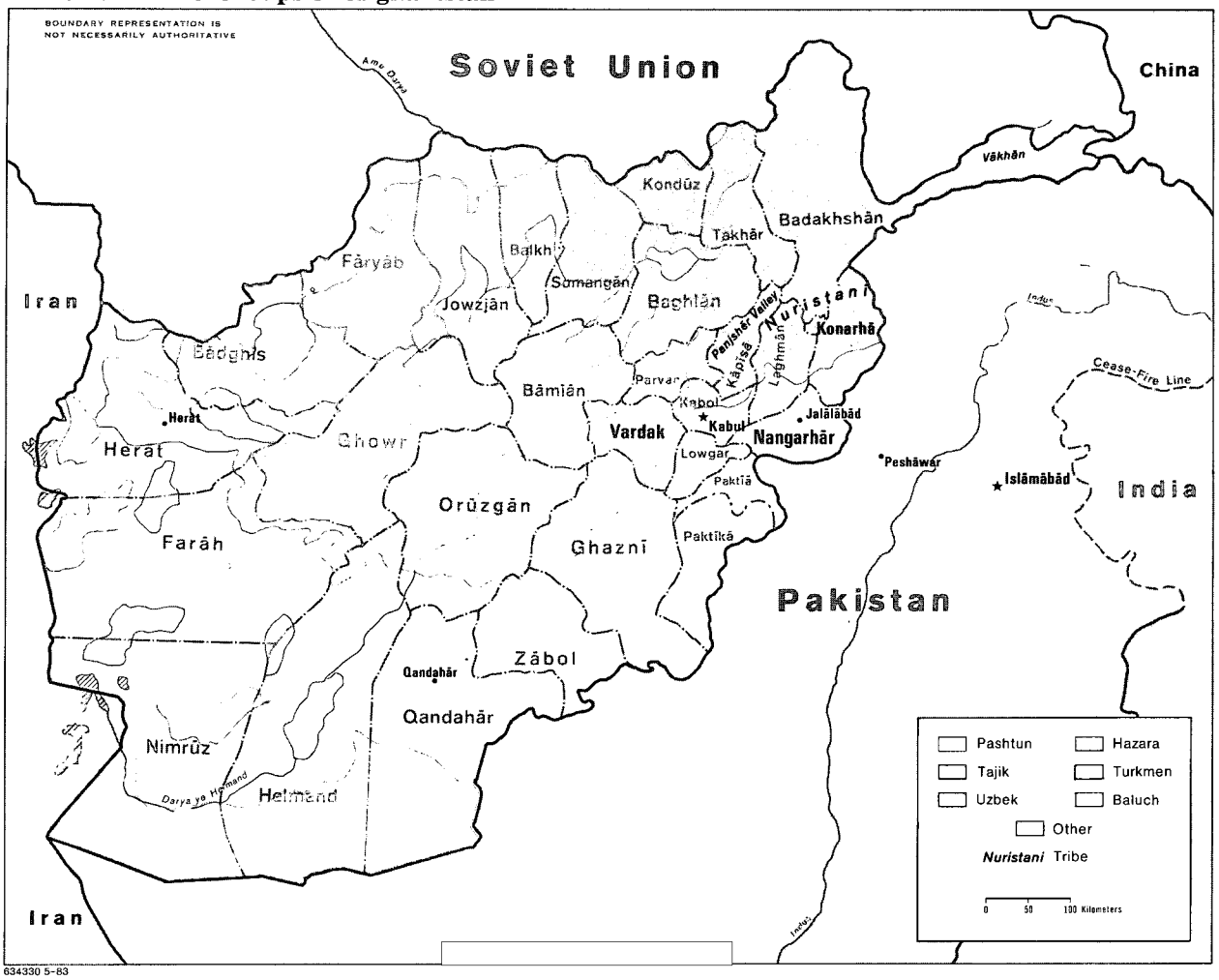
The Fundamentalists

The most important of the fundamentalist groups are the two factions of the Hizbe Islami and the Jamiat-i-Islami. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's faction of the Hizbe Islami probably has a more detailed program than any other resistance organization. A party charter, issued before the Communists came to power, called for a number of Islamic reforms including the compulsory veiling of women and bans against coeducation and men and women working together. Gulbuddin's followers deny, however, that a "dictatorship of mullahs" is either desirable or possible in Afghanistan. The charter also called for an end to oppression by the royal family.

25X1

25X1

Selected Ethnic Groups in Afghanistan



25X1

Neither Younus Khalis—who heads the other faction of the Hizbe Islami—nor Burhanuddin Rabbani, leader of the Jamiat-i-Islami Afghanistan, has put forth as detailed a program. [redacted] Younus—much more a military leader than a politician—maintains that the only constitution Afghanistan needs is the Koran. We believe both men subscribe in general terms to Gulbuddin's Islamic goals, but Khalis and Rabbani are less doctrinaire. Both have been more willing to cooperate with moderate insurgent groups. [redacted] field commanders appeared much less concerned about ideological purity than Gulbuddin's. [redacted]

25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1

Selected Afghan Resistance Organizations

Group	Leader	Ethnic Composition	Political/Religious Orientation	Area of Strength
Hizbe Islami (Gulbuddin)	Gulbuddin Hekmatyar	Pashtun	Islamic fundamentalist	Eastern Afghanistan
Hizbe Islami (Khalis)	Younus Khalis	Pashtun	Islamic fundamentalist	Nangarhar Province
Jamiat-i-Islami (Islamic League)	Burhanuddin Rabbani	Tajik	Islamic fundamentalist	Northeast Afghanistan
Panjsher Valley Organization	Ahmad Shah Masood	Tajik	Jamiat follower	Panjsher Valley
Harakat-i-Inqulab-Islami (Revolutionary Islamic Movement)	Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi	Pashtun	Traditionalist	Eastern Afghanistan
Mahaz-i-Milli-Islami (National Islamic Front)	Syed Ahmad Gailani	Pashtun	Moderate Islamic	Eastern Afghanistan
Jabha-i-Najat-i-Milli (National Liberation Front)	Sibqatullah Mojededi	Pashtun	Moderate Islamic	Eastern Afghanistan
Kunar-Nuristan Union	Syed Shamsuddin Majrooh	Pashtun Nuristani	Tribal	Konarha Province
Vardak Union	Amin Vardak	Pashtun	Tribal	Vardak Province
Durrani Tribes	Azezullah Wasifi	Pashtun	Tribal/Monarchist	Southern Afghanistan
Suzamane Azadelbarache Mardo Me Afghanistan (SAMA) (Organization for the Liberation of Afghanistan)	Abdul Qayyum	Various	Secular/Leftist	Kabul City
Afghan Mellat (Afghan Nation)	Rahim Pushtunyar	Pashtun	National Socialist	None
Shola-i-Jawed (Eternal Flame)		Various	Maoist	None
Shora-i-Itifaq Islami (United Council of Islamic Revolution	Syed Ali Beheshti	Hazara	Secular	Central Afghanistan
Sazman-i-Jihad-i-Akbar-i-Islami (Organization for the Great Islamic War)	Gorgaij Baluch	Baluch	Monarchist	Nimruz Province
Vahdet-i-Islami Afghanistan (Islamic Union)	Hafizullah Siret	Turkic speakers	Ethnic	Northern Afghanistan
Sazmani Nasir (Victory Organization)	Mir Hussain Sadeqi	Hazara	Pro-Iranian	Central Afghanistan
Organization for Strength and Unity for the Liberation of Afghanistan	Mohammad Yusuf	Various	Moderate Secular	Exiles in Europe

25X1

Hizbe Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar

Younus Khalis, leader of the other Hizbe Islami faction

Sygma ©

25X1

25X1

Fundamentalist statements about the Soviet Union undoubtedly contain much bravado but reflect an attitude more uncompromising than that of the moderates. The fundamentalists rule out negotiations with the Afghan Communists and say the only subject they will discuss with Moscow is troop withdrawal. At times they say Afghanistan's future will be decided on the battlefield, where the insurgents will destroy the Soviet forces. There is distrust of the West in all of the fundamentalist groups, most marked in the sometimes open hostility of Gulbuddin, but also evident in statements by other leaders—reported by journalists and others—that the United States is using the resistance for its own purposes or is withholding help because it distrusts Islam.

Gulbuddin's efforts to ensure a dominant position for himself are probably the main source of tension among the fundamentalists.

Gulbuddin stayed out of the various exile alliances until March 1982, when he, Rabbani, and Khalis formed a loose alliance in which Gulbuddin gained the dominant political positions—the presidency for an ally, Abdul Rasoul Sayyaf, and the vice-presidency for himself. By August Khalis and Rabbani had become very concerned about Gulbuddin's alleged efforts to weaken their organizations and his attempts to win support from Iran, for whose revolution Gulbuddin has expressed some admiration.

25X1

25X1

Gulbuddin favors a strong president for Afghanistan—chosen for his dedication to Islam—and some of his statements to newsmen and diplomats have implied that the Afghan Government would not be selected through democratic processes. Some statements by Khalis, however, clearly imply that the selection of any government will be based on the views of the Afghan people, although not necessarily through direct elections.

25X1

25X1

In Afghanistan the rivalry has led to armed clashes between Gulbuddin's faction and other insurgent groups.

during one Soviet effort to clear the Panjsher Valley Hizbe Islami forces attacked the defenders from the rear. clashes in other parts of the country, apparently resulting from

25X1

25X1

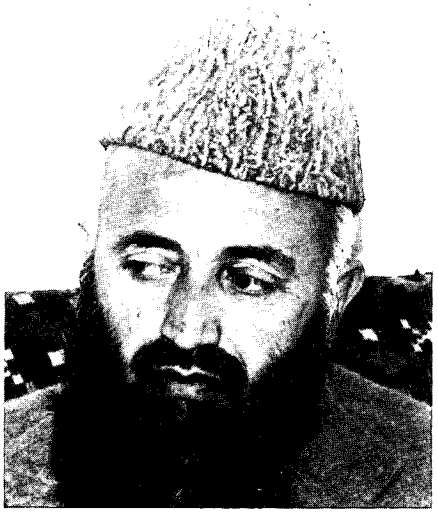
25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1



Burhanuddin Rabbani, Jamiat-i-Islami chief Sygma ©

Sibqatullah Mojededi of the National Liberation Front Sygma ©

25X1

Gulbuddin's efforts to eliminate rival insurgent leaders or co-opt their followers. In one area of Nangarhar Province, fighting resulted in a temporary alliance of all the other resistance groups against the Hizbe Islami.

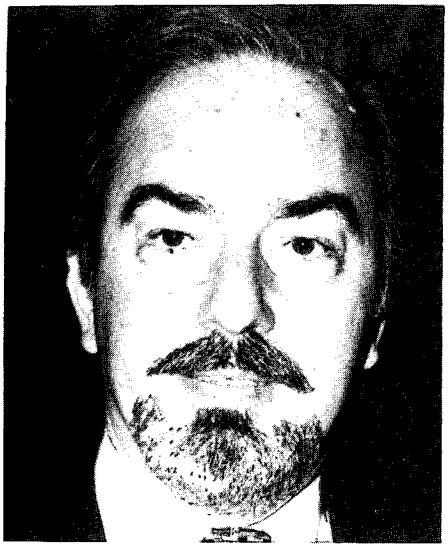
The Moderates

The moderates—including both exile leaders in Peshawar and former government officials based largely in Western Europe—seek a return to the days before Communist rule. Although only a few minor leaders openly advocate a restoration of the monarchy, most see King Zahir Shah as the figure who can unite the resistance. Nevertheless, they have some reservations. exile leader Syed Ahmad Gailani has expressed doubts that the King can actually unite the resistance. Some moderate spokesmen believe that, although the King can unite Afghanistan, other family members are too unpopular to be of use to the insurgency. Others see the King's cousin, Prince Abdul Wali, as the logical resistance field commander.

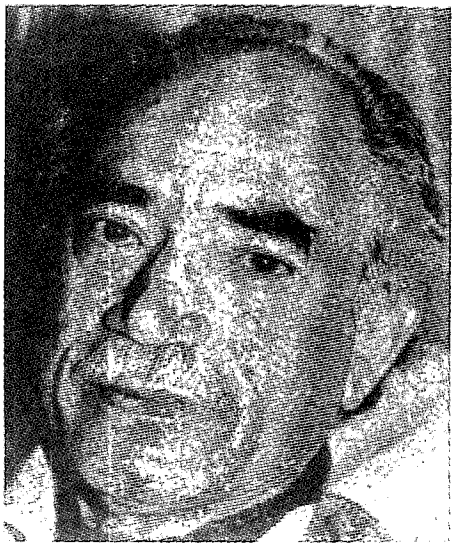
The moderates speak of a government more democratic and less restrictive than before the Communists came to power. Sibqatullah Mojededi and Gailani publicly advocate a democratically elected government, and, at least when talking to Americans, Mojededi speaks of a separation of powers in the government. Although Mojededi makes clear that he wants Afghanistan to be ruled in accordance with Islamic law—he would, for example, eliminate Western practices in the judicial system—he also sees such things as higher education and social equality for women as compatible with Islam. Gailani—although a religious leader—has been critical of Mojededi for being too much a religious fundamentalist, The former government officials exiled in Europe are even less concerned with religion. Their references to Islam seem pro forma, and they appear to regard Islam more as a means of encouraging resistance than a goal in itself. Most of their statements emphasize nationalist resistance to foreign aggression and often do not even mention the defense of Islam as a reason for fighting.

25X1

The moderates seek a negotiated settlement with Moscow. Gailani has said on several occasions that any Afghan government will have to be on good terms with the Soviets. There have been recurrent rumors of



Syed Ahmad Gailani, head of National Islamic Front Keystone ©



Former Prime Minister Mohammad Yusuf

attempts by moderate leaders to open contacts with the Soviets or the Afghan Communists. Former Prime Minister Yusuf has told journalists that the "Finlandization" of Afghanistan is the only realistic solution and implies that he is willing to accept even greater Soviet influence than in pre-Communist days. Far from rejecting Western support, the moderates have asked the United States on a number of occasions to force unity on the resistance.

Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi, chief of the Harakat-i-Inqulab-Islami, is currently allied to Mojededi and Gailani. Even vaguer than others about his goals, he seems ideologically closer to the fundamentalists than to his current colleagues. According to US diplomats, he is seen by many Afghans as a truly Islamic leader opposed to both the Islamic reformers and the influences of the West.

The Bands in Afghanistan

The exiles are the ideological and national political leaders of the resistance and also serve as propagandists and intermediaries with the outside world for the insurgent bands fighting in Afghanistan. Exile influence on the activities of the insurgents, however, is usually limited and indirect.

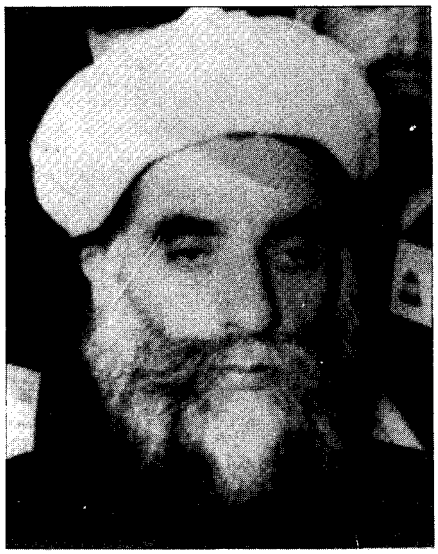
Some of the hundreds of bands fighting in Afghanistan are associated with exile groups, others with regional organizations, and many operate independently. In 1980 an insurgent leader from Konarha Province estimated that only 5 percent of the insurgents there supported the Peshawar groups, and a prominent exile official told a US diplomat that the exiles controlled only 1 percent of the fighting in Afghanistan

the number of insurgent bands having a nominal connection to an exile organization has increased in the past three years, but the exiles do not appear to have any greater control over the fighting.

Most exile leaders have only limited control of even the bands that acknowledge their authority. Younus Khalis, who is sometimes directly involved in the planning and execution of military operations, may have the greatest control, but in only a limited area. At one time Gulbuddin appeared to most observers to have strong control over his followers in Afghanistan.

a number of recent defections to the government or other resistance groups by bands no longer willing to follow his policies.

25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1



Harakat leader Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi

Some Jamiat field commanders acknowledge the authority of Rabbani, although he appears to exert little actual control over their actions. There are, however, many bands with only a nominal relationship. Nabi claims to command some 200,000 men in Afghanistan; the figure may reflect the number who respect Nabi and prefer the Harakat to other exile groups, but Nabi has firm control of few if any bands in Afghanistan. Only a few hundred men are probably directly controlled by Mojededi or Gailani, most based in Pakistan. Westerners who have talked with their ostensible followers fighting in Afghanistan report the bands usually receive neither guidance nor support from Peshawar, and sometimes they know little of either man except that he belongs to a prominent religious family.

Leaders of other bands have told diplomats and newsmen that their only ties to exile groups are an intermittent and sometimes unsatisfactory supply relationship. insurgents sometimes claim to follow an exile leader only in the hope of obtaining arms through him. Some insurgents openly admit they joined an exile group solely because they needed an identification paper to travel unhindered in Afghanistan.

In many talks with newsmen in Afghanistan, insurgents in the field have usually said they are fighting to defend Islam, but their definition of Islam appears to include all traditional ways including the Pashtun code of revenge and other customs that are not Islamic. They also claim to be fighting to free their country from the Soviets, but most seem concerned primarily with keeping Communist troops out of their own village or valley. They rarely appear to have a broad sense of Afghan nationalism. 25X1

Perhaps as basic as any other motivation is the preservation of the Afghan way of life against outside interference. Each small group is fighting to preserve its own traditions and its autonomy. Outsiders—whether Soviets, Afghan Communists, or other insurgent bands—are a threat. Under Soviet military pressure, insurgent bands have begun cooperating to obtain better intelligence, acquire and move weapons and other supplies more easily, stage operations requiring forces larger than a single band, and coordinate operations so that one band does not interfere with another. 25X1

25X1

The trend has been encouraged by a belief that support from exile groups in Pakistan is inadequate. A common insurgent complaint is that the exiles are withholding arms, and many claim that only by uniting can they obtain weapons from the Peshawar groups or from foreigners themselves.

Insurgent "Governments" 25X1

In some areas small local governments began to coalesce when it became apparent that greater cooperation among the civilian governments was needed to support the military organizations. The most fully developed of these organizations is the United Council of the Islamic Revolution, headed by Syed Ali Beheshti, in the Hazara area of central Afghanistan. It collects taxes, administers justice, maintains the Hazara military force, and attempts to conduct foreign

25X1

25X1

affairs through two offices in Iran and one in Pakistan. Although the organization's stated goals are defending Islam and driving out the Soviets, we believe the movement eventually may advocate independence. The Hazaras—Mongol Shias in a predominantly Caucasian Sunni country—have long resented their second-class status in Afghanistan. [redacted] 25X1 25X1

The Tajiks of the Panjsher Valley under Ahmad Shah Masood have been nearly as successful in creating a functioning local government, despite continued Soviet military pressure. Although the Panjsher organization is still intact, the establishment of Soviet garrisons in the valley in 1982 probably will inhibit its ability to administer civilian affairs there. [redacted] 25X1

Panjsheri Commander Ahmad Shah Masood [redacted] Camera Press © 25X1 25X1

Elsewhere in Afghanistan, similar developments have not generally led to as fully formed governments. [redacted] in northeastern Afghanistan, the insurgents are collecting traditional Islamic taxes, using the funds to carry out governmental functions and support the activities of village governments. Pashtun tribesmen in Vardak Province cooperate through the decisions reached by the consensus of military leaders elected by each village. Groups in the Kabul area—including the Panjsheris—have formed an organization to coordinate their military activities. There are reports of unification among Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Turkmen in northern Afghanistan. [redacted] 25X1

The weaker regional organizations only partly control the areas in which they operate, and even the two most successful regional groups—the Jamiat organization in the Panjsher Valley and the Hazara Council—face opposition in their home territory. Masood's followers have had frequent clashes with Panjsheris loyal to Gulbuddin. [redacted] a militant pro-Iranian organization is becoming a serious rival to the Council in the Hazarajat [redacted] 25X1

All of the organizations share a number of traits. They are generally confined to a single ethnic group. There is, for example, little interest by either side in cooperation between the Hazaras and the various Pashtun organizations along the borders of the Hazarajat. [redacted] 25X1 25X1 25X1

Exceptions are the primarily military umbrella for the Kabul area and the Kunar-Nuristan Union—composed of both Pashtuns and Nuristanis—in Konarha Province. We believe their longstanding rivalry is an important reason the union has not flourished. [redacted] 25X1

The regional groups tend to ignore the moderate-fundamentalist divisions of the exiles. The Vardak Union contains groups ostensibly loyal to several different exile groups; one reason for its formation was the disillusionment of all with their nominal leaders in Peshawar. The Hazaras never expected or got much help from the exiles—they had little alternative but to try to open their own lines to the outside. The Kabul organization includes groups with widely differing ideologies. Masood, in the Panjsher Valley, claims complete loyalty to the Jamiat—but this has not prevented him from dealing with Jamiat rivals, or [redacted] from establishing an independent office in Peshawar. There have even 25X1 25X1 25X1 25X1

been a few instances in which [redacted] Gulbuddin's followers have cooperated with groups with which he was at odds, and disillusioned with his divisive policies, some of his followers have transferred their allegiance to other fundamentalist organizations. [redacted]

[redacted] during the Panjsher Valley offensive in May 1982, insurgents, including some Hazaras and Nuristanis, traveled to the valley to help the local Tajik guerrillas, while other bands conducted diversionary attacks on the Soviet POL pipeline. The help, however, may be more a reflection of the prestige of Masood than a trend toward interregional and intergroup cooperation. [redacted]

[redacted] where bands are cooperating, inadvertent interference with each other's operations is rare, and intelligence is passed quickly from group to group. When a target is too strong for a single band, several may join to attack it. The regional organizations have been able to distribute the burden of the war more evenly—at one time villages on the periphery of an insurgent-controlled area had to do most of the fighting; now men from villages in the interior are sent to help. [redacted]

[redacted] the ease with which supply convoys and bands returning from Pakistan move within Afghanistan, despite ethnic and ideological differences. Ethnic rivalries, political disagreements, and depredations by insurgents have occasionally resulted in clashes with villagers, [redacted] insurgents traveling through an area are welcomed by both the population and local insurgent bands. [redacted]

Civilian Support

[redacted] civilian support for insurgents remains high in most of Afghanistan. [redacted] villages continue to supply insurgents with food, shelter, and recruits. [redacted]

Some diplomats and journalists believe, however, that tactics such as mass arrests, frequent sweep operations, and what the insurgents believe to be retaliatory bombings are beginning to reduce insurgent activity. [redacted] civilian morale is declining in areas—such as the Panjsher Valley—where there has been great Soviet pressure. Although assassinations and sabotage continue in the capital, most Kabulis seem to have accepted the Soviet occupation. According to the Indian Ambassador, a large Soviet presence has cowed Jalalabad. The resistance in Herat and Qandahar did not recover until the spring of 1983 from large-scale Soviet operations in both cities in January 1982. The departure of most of the civilian population for Pakistan long ago brought peace to the Vakhan (Wakhan Corridor) in the far northeast. [redacted]

The evidence is inconclusive whether the Soviets have actually embarked on a strategy of retaliation and pressure on civilians. The Soviets have shelled and bombed villages, but it is difficult to tell whether the intent was to intimidate villagers or simply to attack insurgents believed to be in a village. Even if civilians were the intended target, the attack could have been made by the local Afghan or Soviet commander on his own initiative. Moreover, much of Afghanistan has so far escaped the attacks on villages, mass arrests, and destruction of crops. [redacted]

In much of Afghanistan, the relationship between the resistance and civilians is so close that any distinction is somewhat artificial. [redacted] a typical insurgent spends part of his time at his civilian occupation as men rotate into and out of the local resistance band. In some villages most of the population probably consists of part-time resistance fighters and their families. Only the few bands operating outside their home areas are clearly distinct from the local population. [redacted]

[redacted] no instance in which a village has refused to support its local insurgent band. There have been [redacted] insurgents deciding not to fight because of fear of retaliation against civilians. Even before the alleged Soviet intimidation campaign began, resistance bands often planned their operations to limit the likelihood of reprisals. They attacked convoys where it would be difficult for the Soviets to assign the responsibility to a specific village. For the same reason, some bands set up bases away from their villages. [redacted]

25X1

A few bands, either because of military pressure on their villages or disputes with other bands, have defected to the government. these groups are often made into village defense units, retaining their weapons and remaining in a position to rejoin the resistance should circumstances change. We know of less than 40 defections so far from the hundreds of insurgent bands, and some of these "defections" were designed only to obtain weapons or set up ambushes of government forces.

There have been scattered reports of villages—usually supported by the local insurgents—refusing to feed and shelter bands operating outside their home areas and on occasion actively resisting them most of the clashes between villagers and insurgents to excessive demands by outside insurgents for supplies and money or attempts to impose their authority or ideology on villagers and local insurgent bands, rather than fear of Soviet reprisals.

Our assesment is that the migration of perhaps 20 percent of the total population of the country into Pakistan, Iran, and Kabul has had mixed effects. Those remaining in villages apparently grow enough to feed the freedom fighters; some men return from Pakistan or the cities both to fight and farm. Fewer civilians are available in the countryside to inform insurgents about local conditions, but more people with contacts with the insurgents are in Soviet-controlled areas and able to report. The same contacts have probably increased the government's ability to learn about insurgent activities in outlying areas. We also believe the departure of civilians makes it easier for the Soviets to identify those who remain as insurgents.

Prospects for the Future

We believe the resistance probably will grow stronger in the next two or three years. Still, our assessment is that basic weaknesses preclude its moving beyond small unit guerrilla operations and raise questions about its long-term survival.

Insurgent Military Capabilities

Better tactics and more and better weapons have been important factors in the marked improvement in insurgent military capabilities since the Soviet invasion. The insurgents have become effective guerrilla fighters but are still unable to defeat main Soviet units.

Tactics

Most offensive operations are small unit attacks on road convoys and small military posts. The insurgents try to avoid combat with main Soviet units. Some bands plan and execute operations well, but others show serious deficiencies.

Weapons

Bands are armed with rifles, heavy machineguns, antitank rockets, and mines. There are wide differences from band to band. Some can attack well-armed convoys; others are able to stage only occasional attacks on poorly defended posts.

Intelligence

The insurgents obtain good information on Soviet and government plans and activities

Training

Most insurgents are familiar with rifles, but only a few have received training on other weapons, a principal reason for their ineffective use of SA-7s and the inefficient use of crew-served weapons in many bands.

Supply

Arms are obtained in Afghanistan through capture, purchase from government troops, and from deserters. Most machineguns, antitank rockets, and modern mines come from foreign sources. Food and other supplies are obtained locally. Supplies are generally transported by animal caravans.

In our view, most of the potential for progress lies within individual insurgent bands rather than with the resistance movement as a whole. As small unit commanders and their men become more experienced, and if more weapons become available, more bands will reach the standards so far attained by only a few.

We do not expect significant improvements in the most effective insurgent organizations. They have already developed effective tactics for guerrilla operations, and any tactical modifications in the future probably will be designed to offset new Soviet countermeasures.

Because of both the low number of defections so far and the widespread hostility toward the Soviets, we doubt that enough bands will stop fighting in the next few years to affect the level of fighting. Only a handful of the hundreds of insurgent bands have defected to the government. Soviet sweep operations—through both damage to the bands themselves and pressure on civilians—generally have brought only temporary and local reductions in the level of resistance over the past three years. Bribery and other inducements to tribesmen have also brought the Soviets no lasting benefits—the tribesmen probably will take the bribes and continue fighting the Communists.

the Soviets have recently begun negotiating cease-fires with insurgent leaders that will enable the Soviets to withdraw forces from some areas to increase pressure on resistance in other places. We believe the Soviets also see the negotiations as an opportunity to further divide the resistance and convince some insurgent leaders to change sides. Past developments wherein tribal leaders who have reached accommodations with the Soviets have often lost influence—or their lives—suggest that the Soviets will be unable to negotiate cease-fires with a significant number of bands unless resistance morale begins to collapse. Moreover, we doubt that the Afghan Communists could exploit a cease-fire to increase their influence in the countryside because their programs remain as unpopular as ever.

The way in which the Soviets are conducting the war leads us to believe that they assume that eventually the insurgents and the Afghan people will become unwilling to bear the cost of continued resistance. Even if the Soviets are right, we believe that—barring a massive augmentation of Soviet forces—most insurgents will still be resisting two or three years from now. In much of Afghanistan, from the local point of view, the benefits of continued resistance will still outweigh the costs. The resistance will probably be judged a success if it prevents the Communists from gaining local control, especially if Soviet and government attacks have been so infrequent that casualties remain low.

We see little prospect for the development of a unified national resistance in Afghanistan. The conflicting political views in the resistance are irreconcilable, and many—probably a majority—of the insurgents are opposed to any strong central government. Limited cooperation among regional groups is likely, but ethnic and regional differences make it unlikely that they will coalesce into a national organization. Even the few observers who believe the present struggle will result in a unified resistance and a true Afghan nationalism expect the process to take decades

We believe the lack of unity will also be one of many factors precluding the expansion of the resistance beyond a guerrilla war. Even if foreign supporters were willing to supply the equipment and training necessary for the formation of "main force" units capable of fighting Soviet units on equal terms, the fragmented resistance would be unable to develop the logistic system larger units would require or the command structure to use the forces effectively.

The squabbling of the exiles in Peshawar has tarnished the image of the resistance internationally, and the lack of any organization able to speak for the resistance as a whole has allowed the Communists, by default, to represent Afghanistan in the United Nations and other international organizations. The resistance has played only a minor role in orchestrating

25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1

international condemnations of the USSR, obtaining aid for Afghan refugees, gaining outside support for the insurgents, or in negotiations on Afghanistan's future.

As long as others are willing to undertake these tasks, the inability of the fragmented resistance to achieve a united political front will not seriously harm the insurgency. If international interest in supporting the insurgents or the refugees began to lag, their past ineffectiveness in influencing international opinion or government leaders suggests they could do little to press foreign leaders to continue support.

Implications for the United States and the USSR

The most important result of continued resistance, in our view, for both Washington and Moscow will be to deny the Soviets the opportunities in the region that would follow the consolidation of their hold on Afghanistan. Both the need to devote their efforts to fighting insurgents and the lack of secure supply lines almost preclude the use of Afghanistan as a base for projecting military power in the Indian subcontinent or the Persian Gulf. Some of the hostility and suspicion engendered—especially in Islamic countries—by Soviet actions in Afghanistan will remain whatever the military outcome, but continued fighting helps keep the hostility at a higher level. Successful resistance also weakens the image of the USSR as a country whose wishes must be accommodated because it has the will and ability to use as much force as necessary to achieve its goals. As long as the Soviets continue fighting, however, Afghanistan will also be a reminder of Moscow's persistence in pursuing its objectives.

US policymakers could face difficult decisions on a response if continuing resistance leads to massive Soviet reinforcements. Many resistance leaders have said that if the fighting continues long enough, Moscow will decide conquering Afghanistan is not worth the cost and will withdraw its forces. The war in Afghanistan will be a drain on Soviet resources, but the Soviets have so far been willing to bear this burden. Afghanistan complicates Moscow's relations with most other governments, hindering negotiations on a wide variety of issues. The Afghan issue, however, has much less impact on Soviet relations with many countries than it did three years ago. Despite the hopes of the insurgents, in our view, Moscow does not believe these costs outweigh the damage withdrawal would do to the USSR's interests and image. At some point Moscow might decide a massive reinforcement designed to reduce significantly the level of insurgency was a more attractive option than either a continuing deadlock or a peace settlement that left the resistance in control.

Other problems for the United States could arise because of Washington's interest in stability in Pakistan. Fighting in Afghanistan will probably force more refugees into Pakistan, adding to economic and social pressures that contribute to political instability there. Soviet control of Afghanistan, however, might have the same effect, and we believe that many of the more than 2 million Afghans who have fled to Pakistan will not return to a Communist Afghanistan. Because of Afghanistan, Soviet pressure on Pakistan—and to a lesser extent Iran—will continue, and the Soviets could easily escalate this pressure through small-scale cross-border raids. We believe, however, that Afghanistan's neighbors will be much less susceptible to Soviet pressure than they would if Moscow gained effective control of Afghanistan.

25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1
25X1